

REMARKS

Claims 8-10, 18-20, and 23-45 are pending in the application. Claims 8-10 and 23-45 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to non-elected inventions. In the final Office Action of March 13, 2007, the Examiner made the following disposition:

- A.) Objected to the Title of the Invention.
- B.) Rejected claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Roosendaal, et al.*
- C.) Rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Roosendaal, et al.* in view of *Kubota, et al.* and *Kitagawa, et al.*

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and address the Examiner's disposition below.

A.) Objection to the Title of the Invention:

The Title of the Invention has been amended as per the Examiner's request to overcome the objection.

Applicants respectfully submit the objection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

B.) Rejection of claims 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Roosendaal, et al.*:

Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that *Roosendaal* cannot render obvious claim 18, because *Roosendaal* is not a proper reference under 35 U.S.C. §102. Specifically, Applicants' claimed application has an invention date that is at least as early as February 26, 2002, which is before *Roosendaal's* U.S. filing date of August 26, 2002.

In the Office Action of March 13, 2007, the Examiner contends that Applicants attempt to claim priority to JP 2002-049163. Applicants disagree. Instead, Applicants use JP 2002-049163 to show a conception date prior to *Roosendaal's* U.S. filing date.

Applicant's present application claims priority to Japanese Application No. 2002-333364, which was filed in Japan on November 18, 2002. JP 2002-333364 is a continuation application of Japanese Application No. 2002-049163, which was filed in Japan on February 26, 2002. JP 2002-049163 was abandoned at the time of filing JP 2002-333364.

JP 2002-333364 and JP 2002-049163 share a similar specification. The subject matter claimed in claims 18-20 was disclosed in JP 2002-333364 and JP 2002-049163. Therefore, the subject matter of claims 18-20 was invented at least as early February 26, 2002, which is the filing date of JP 2002-049163.

Applicants submit herewith an affidavit under 35 C.F.R. §1.131, which provides additional information and support for Applicants' conception date at least as early as February 26, 2002, diligence, and reduction to practice.

Accordingly, Applicants' claimed invention has an invention date that is at least as early as February 26, 2002, which is before *Roosendaal's* U.S. filing date of August 26, 2002. Thus, *Roosendaal* cannot be used as a reference to render obvious Applicants' claimed invention.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

C.) Rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Roosendaal, et al.* in view of *Kubota, et al.* and *Kitagawa, et al.*:

Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection.

Claim 18 is allowable over *Roosendaal* as discussed above. As *Roosendaal* is not a proper 35 U.S.C. §102 reference, *Roosendaal* cannot be combined with *Kubota* and *Kitagawa* to render obvious claim 18. Therefore, *Roosendaal* in view of *Kubota* and *Kitagawa* still fails to disclose or suggest claim 18.

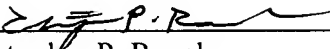
Claim 20 depends directly or indirectly from claim 18 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 18 is allowable.

Applicants respectfully submit the rejection has been overcome and request that it be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that claims 18-20 are patentable. It is therefore submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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